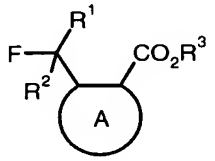
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please change the heading at page #, line 1, from "~~Claims:~~" to --WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:--

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claims 1-17 (canceled)

-- Claim 18 (new): A process for preparing fluoromethyl-substituted heterocycles of formula (I)



(I)

in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

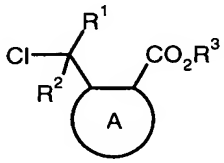
R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl,

A is a 5-membered heterocycle selected from the group consisting of pyrazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 1-position, thiazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position, and oxazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position, and

R^4 is C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_3-C_6-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_4-alkylthio-C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or phenyl,

comprising converting a chloromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (II)



(II)

in which R^1, R^2, R^3, and A are each as defined for formula (I),

to a fluoromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (I) in the presence of a fluorinating agent and optionally in the presence of a diluent.

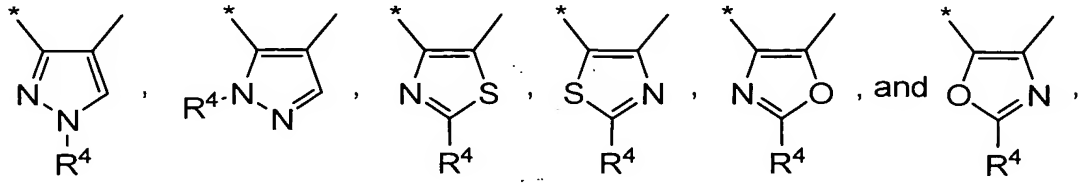
Claim 19 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein for the chloromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (II),

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^3 is C_1-C_4-alkyl,

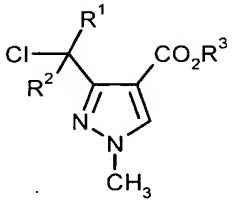
A is a 5-membered heterocycle selected from the group consisting of



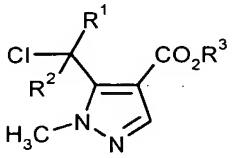
where in each case the bond marked by * is joined to the $-CClR^1R^2$ group and the other bond is joined to the CO_2R^3 ester group, and

R^4 is methyl, ethyl, n-propyl, isopropyl, cyclopropyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, or phenyl.

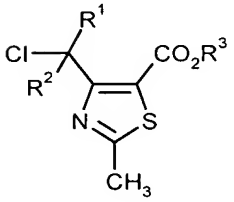
Claim 20 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the chloromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (II) is selected from the group consisting of compounds of formulas (II-a), (II-b), (II-c), and (II-d)



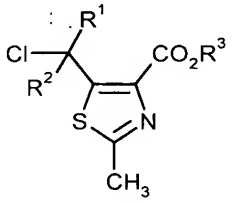
(II-a),



(II-b),



(II-c), and



(II-d),

in which R^1, R^2, and R^3 are as defined in Claim 18.

Claim 21 (new): A process according to Claim 20 in which R^1 is chlorine, R^2 is hydrogen, and R^3 is methyl or ethyl.

Claim 22 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the fluorinating agent is an alkali metal fluoride, cobalt(III) fluoride, halogen fluoride, antimony fluoride, molybdenum fluoride, hydrogen fluoride, hydrogen fluoride/pyridine mixture, a tertiary ammonium hydrofluoride, or a trialkylamine hydrofluoride of the formula n HF / $N(Alk)_3$ in which n is 1, 2, or 3, and Alk is C_1-C_4-alkyl.

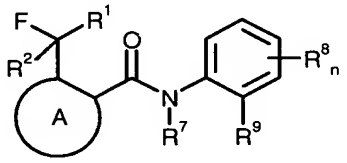
Claim 23 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the fluorinating agent is 3 HF / $N(Et)_3$ (Franz reagent), 3 HF / $N(n\text{-}Bu)_3$, or HF/pyridine (Olah's reagent).

Claim 24 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the fluorinating agent is 3 HF / $N(Et)_3$ (Franz reagent) or 3 HF / $N(n\text{-}Bu)_3$.

Claim 25 (new): A process according to Claim 18 that it is carried out at a temperature of 80°C to 170°C.

Claim 26 (new): A process according to Claim 18 that it is carried out at a temperature of 120°C to 150°C.

Claim 27 (new): A process for preparing a fungicidally active carboxamide of formula (VII)



(VII)

in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

A is a 5-membered heterocycle selected from the group consisting of pyrazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 1-position, thiazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position, and oxazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position,

R^4 is C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_3-C_6-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_4-alkylthio-C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or phenyl,

R^7 is hydrogen, C_1-C_8-alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkylsulphinyl, C_1-C_6-alkylsulphonyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-cycloalkyl; is C_1-C_6-haloalkyl, C_1-C_4-haloalkylthio, C_1-C_4-haloalkylsulphinyl, C_1-C_4-haloalkylsulphonyl, halo-C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-halocycloalkyl having in each case 1 to 9 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms; is formyl, formyl-C_1-C_3-alkyl, (C_1-C_3-alkyl)carbonyl-C_1-C_3-alkyl, or (C_1-C_3-alkoxy)carbonyl-C_1-C_3-alkyl; is halo-(C_1-C_3-alkyl)carbonyl-C_1-C_3-alkyl or halo-(C_1-C_3-alkoxy)carbonyl-C_1-C_3-alkyl having in each case 1 to 13 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms; is (C_1-C_8-alkyl)carbonyl, (C_1-C_8-alkoxy)carbonyl, (C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl)carbonyl, or (C_3-C_8-cycloalkyl)carbonyl; is (C_1-C_6-haloalkyl)carbonyl, (C_1-C_6-haloalkoxy)-carbonyl, (halo-C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl)carbonyl, or (C_3-C_8-halo-cycloalkyl)carbonyl having in each case 1 to 9 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms; or is $-C(=O)C(=O)R^{10}$, $-CONR^{11}R^{12}$, or $-CH_2NR^{13}R^{14}$,

R^8 is hydrogen, fluorine, chlorine, methyl, isopropyl, methylthio, or trifluoromethyl,

n is 1, 2, 3 or 4,

R^9 is optionally mono- to pentasubstituted phenyl having identical or different substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy, C_1-C_2-haloalkyl, and C_1-C_2-haloalkoxy having in each case 1 to 5 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms, hydroxyimino-C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxyimino-C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-halo-alkoxyimino-C_1-C_4-alkyl, and, when substituted with two adjacent substituents, difluoromethylenedioxy or tetrafluoroethylenedioxy; is C_{3-10}-cycloalkyl or C_3-C_{10}-bicycloalkyl that is in each case optionally mono- to tetrasubstituted, identically or differently, by halogen and/or C_1-C_4-alkyl; is unsubstituted C_2-C_{20}-alkyl, or C_1-C_{20}-alkyl that is mono- or polysubstituted, identically or differently, by fluorine, chlorine, bromine, iodine, and/or C_3-C_6-cycloalkyl in which case the cycloalkyl moiety is itself optionally mono- to tetrasubstituted, identically or differently, by fluorine, chlorine, bromine, iodine, C_1-C_4-alkyl, and/or C_1-C_4-haloalkyl; or is C_2-C_{20}-alkenyl or C_2-C_{20}-alkynyl that is in each case optionally mono- or polysubstituted, identically or differently, by

fluorine, chlorine, bromine, iodine, and/or C_3-C_6-cycloalkyl in which the cycloalkyl moiety is itself optionally mono- to tetrasubstituted, identically or differently, by fluorine, chlorine, bromine, iodine, C_1-C_4-alkyl, and/or C_1-C_4-haloalkyl,

R^{10} is hydrogen, C_1-C_8-alkyl, C_1-C_8-alkoxy, C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-cycloalkyl; or is C_1-C_6-haloalkyl, C_1-C_6-haloalkoxy, halo-C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-halocycloalkyl having in each case 1 to 9 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms,

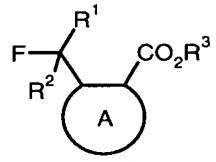
R^{11} and R^{12} are each independently hydrogen, C_1-C_8-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-cycloalkyl; or are each independently C_1-C_8-haloalkyl, halo-C_1-C_4-alkoxy-C_1-C_4-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-halocycloalkyl having in each case 1 to 9 fluorine, chlorine and/or bromine atoms; or R^{11} and R^{12}, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bonded, are a saturated heterocycle having 5 to 8 ring atoms that is optionally mono- or polysubstituted, identically or differently, by halogen or C_1-C_4-alkyl, and in which the heterocycle optionally contains 1 or 2 additional nonadjacent heteroatoms selected from the group of oxygen, sulphur, and NR^{15},

R^{13} and R^{14} are each independently hydrogen, C_1-C_8-alkyl, or C_3-C_8-cycloalkyl; or are each independently C_1-C_8-haloalkyl or C_3-C_8-halocycloalkyl having in each case 1 to 9 fluorine, chlorine, and/or bromine atoms; or R^{13} and R^{14}, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bonded, are a saturated heterocycle having 5 to 8 ring atoms that is optionally mono- or polysubstituted, identically or differently, by halogen or C_1-C_4-alkyl, and in which the heterocycle optionally contains 1 or 2 additional nonadjacent heteroatoms selected from the group of oxygen, sulphur, and NR^{15}, and

R^{15} is hydrogen or C_1-C_6-alkyl,

comprising

(1) hydrolyzing a fluoromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (I)



(I)

in which

R^1, R^2, and A are each as defined for formula (VII), and

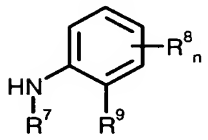
R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl,

in the presence of a base and optionally in the presence of a diluent, to form a free acid, and

(2) subsequently either

(i) converting the free acid to the corresponding acid chloride in the presence of a chlorinating agent and optionally in the presence of a diluent, or

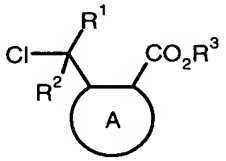
(ii) reacting the free acid directly with an aniline derivative of the formula (VIII)



(VIII)

in which R^7, R^8, n and R^9 are each as defined for formula (VII), optionally in the presence of a catalyst, optionally in the presence of a condensing agent, optionally in the presence of an acid binding agent, and optionally in the presence of a diluent.

Claim 28 (new): A process according to Claim 27 wherein the compound of formula (I) is obtained by reacting a chloromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (II)



(II)

in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

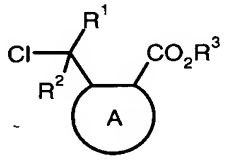
R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl, and

A is a 5-membered heterocycle selected from the group consisting of pyrazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 1-position, thiazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position, and oxazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position,

with a fluorinating agent, optionally in the presence of a diluent.

Claim 29 (new): A chloromethyl-substituted heterocycle of formula (II)



(II)

in which

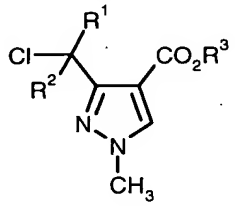
R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl, and

A is a 5-membered heterocycle selected from the group consisting of pyrazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 1-position, thiazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position, and oxazole that is substituted by R^4 in the 2-position.

Claim 30 (new): A compound of formula (II-a)



(II-a)

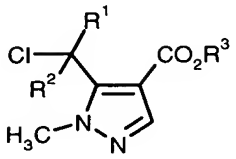
in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine, and

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl.

Claim 31 (new): A compound of formula (II-b)



(II-b)

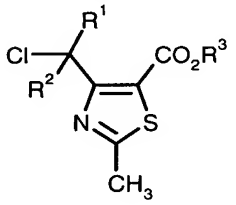
in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine, and

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl.

Claim 32 (new): A compound of formula (II-c)



(II-c)

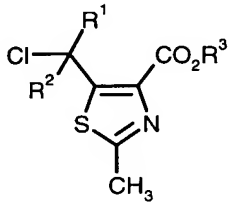
in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine, and

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl.

Claim 33 (new): A compound of formula (II-d)



(II-d)

in which

R^1 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine,

R^2 is hydrogen, fluorine, or chlorine, and

R^3 is C_1-C_6-alkyl. --